

SHENSHOO



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By
WALLACE. W.
KIRKLAND



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*The first wolf, gorged with food, failed to dodge
the lightning blow of her forefoot.*

SHENSHOO

THE STORY OF A MOOSE

By
WALLACE W. KIRKLAND

Drawings by
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CHAPTER I

THE WOLVES FIND SHENSHOO

THE fighting of wolves was the first sound picked up by the large, soft ears of Shenshoo, the moose calf. It came from two of these huge, gray animals quarreling over the remains of Shenshoo's twin brother.

His mother had tramped many miles before selecting the spot which was to be his birthplace. It was a dense clump of spruce growing close against the sheltering base of a tall, overhanging rock cliff, on the shores of an ice-bound lake in the wilds of northern Canada. The closely interwoven branches of the evergreens made an almost water-proof shelter, and, being on the south side of the cliff, it was protected from the cold winds which still blew from the snow covered fields to the north.

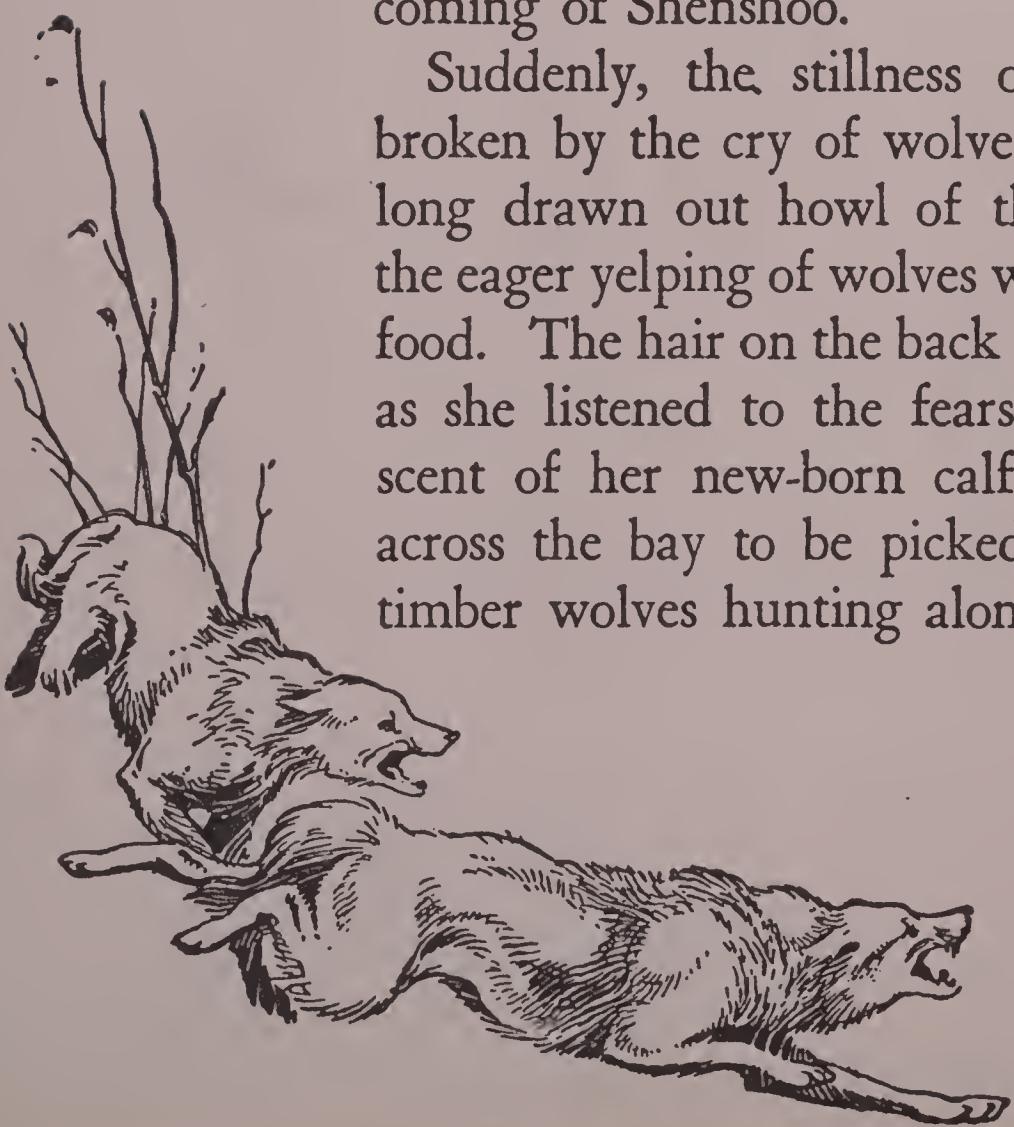
She had spent weeks in the vicinity before deciding, and at no time had she been dis-



turbed. Never once had the lake winds carried to her wide nostrils the scent dreaded above all others—the scent of man. No wolf had howled to disturb her peace as she fed upon the green shoots of birch and poplar, which everywhere were announcing that spring was not far distant. Her animal instincts told her that here indeed was the ideal place for the birth of her young.

Shenshoo's twin had been born just before daylight. With mother love the cow moose licked the coarse hair on the steaming young body of the calf panting there on the carpet of moss by her side. Anxiously she waited the coming of Shenshoo.

Suddenly, the stillness of the dawn was broken by the cry of wolves. It was not the long drawn out howl of the lone wolf, but the eager yelping of wolves which have smelled food. The hair on the back of the cow bristled as she listened to the fearsome sound. The scent of her new-born calf had been blown across the bay to be picked up by a pair of timber wolves hunting along the ridge.



Pointing their keen noses in the air the hungry animals quickly discerned the direction from which the smell of food was coming. Skirting the bay they followed the shore and soon approached the clump of spruce. The frantic mother was unable to protect her first born. At the arrival of the wolves the weak little fellow scrambled to his scraggly legs. Much too frightened to heed the warning sounds made by his mother, he staggered out of the sheltering trees, only to be quickly dispatched by the two marauders.

And then Shenshoo was born.

Confident at the ease with which they had captured the first calf the wolves returned. But now, instead of a helpless cow moose giving birth to a calf under a tree, they were met in the open by an avalanche of fury—a mother robbed of her young. Shenshoo was wriggling on the ground still too weak to stand, but his mother rushed to meet the attackers. The first wolf, careless from success, and gorged with food, failed to dodge the lightning blow of her fore foot. This cloven-edged weapon, with

hundreds of pounds behind it, speeded with the rage of a deprived mother, struck behind the shoulder blades and crushed him to earth. Again and again those terrific hoofs descended. The cry of the wolf—a snarl at first—changed to a whine of pain, and then was stilled as his mangled body was trampled into a shapeless and lifeless mass.

The second wolf, sensing the danger in front, circled to attack from the rear. Sinking his fangs into the tendon of the moose's hind leg he hung on. He was using the age old method of the wolf pack for bringing a running animal to earth. But now he was alone, and instead of attacking an animal fleeing with fear, he was battling one mad with rage, and fighting to protect her young. Kicking out viciously, and at the same time pivoting quickly, the moose broke the grip of the wolf and flung him far from her. He landed with a thud on his side, regained his feet in an instant, and came at her again. With bared teeth he sprang straight for her shaggy throat. He missed and his open jaws collided with the hard bone of



her monstrous head. The impact stunned the wolf and he fell to the ground on his back, his feet clawing the empty air. Before he could rise the terrible hoofs of the maddened moose had done their work, and the life of Shenshoo was saved.



CHAPTER II

SHENSHOO MEETS HIS SISTER

SHENSHOO remained for three days surely hidden in the dark spruce thicket in which he was born. He saw his mother only at feeding time, and then she had a curious way of coming to him. So silently did she approach that he was never aware of her presence until her dark body suddenly loomed up a few yards away from his shelter. Even then she would not begin feeding him until she had assured herself, by walking back and forth a number of times and sniffing the air, that there were no enemies about. And so cleverly did she feed him that an observer watching the process would never have guessed that the dark green clump of brush in which she stood so calmly chewing her cud, was really a screen hiding a baby moose eating his dinner.

Once she stayed away an unusually long

time and Shenshoo became terribly hungry. When at last he saw her outside his barrier he didn't wait but rushed out and met her in the open with a low squeal of delight. Uttering a grunt of rebuke she came right at him and with a vicious butt knocked him off his feet. Surprised he got up and started towards her whimpering, but was quickly made to understand, by a series of blows, that never was he to come out to meet his mother. Even though famished, he must remain concealed until she found it safe to approach him.

The days passed rapidly for Shenshoo. He would take long naps between feeding times, his long legs tucked under his body to keep them warm. A pair of flying squirrels often awakened him by scurrying along the rock ledges above and sending down a shower of loose snow. Once, as he slept, a shrill scream startled him. He flung his head up just in time to see a Whiskey Jack—the teasing Blue Jay of the north woods—go fluttering off through the branches.

On the morning of the third day, after feed-

ing him, his mother started along the shore and called to him to follow. But remembering his former lesson he was afraid to venture out into the light. She called him a second time, and still he refused to move. Quickly retracing her steps, she got behind him and roughly pushed him out of his snug retreat. Then, going ahead, she called him again, and he trotted along after her. His infant days were over.

It was really a very clumsy looking youngster who jogged along behind his mother through the Canadian woods that April morning. The ground was still covered with snow, and Shenshoo reached down to taste it. He was surprised to find, however, that his mouth couldn't touch the snow because his front feet were too long. It was only by kneeling that he was able to lick the cool white stuff.

Heading away from the shore, mother and son started up the side of a steep hill, densely covered with a growth of jack pine, and climbed over the ridge. They were heading north. Shenshoo found the traveling very tiring at first and often lay down to rest. When



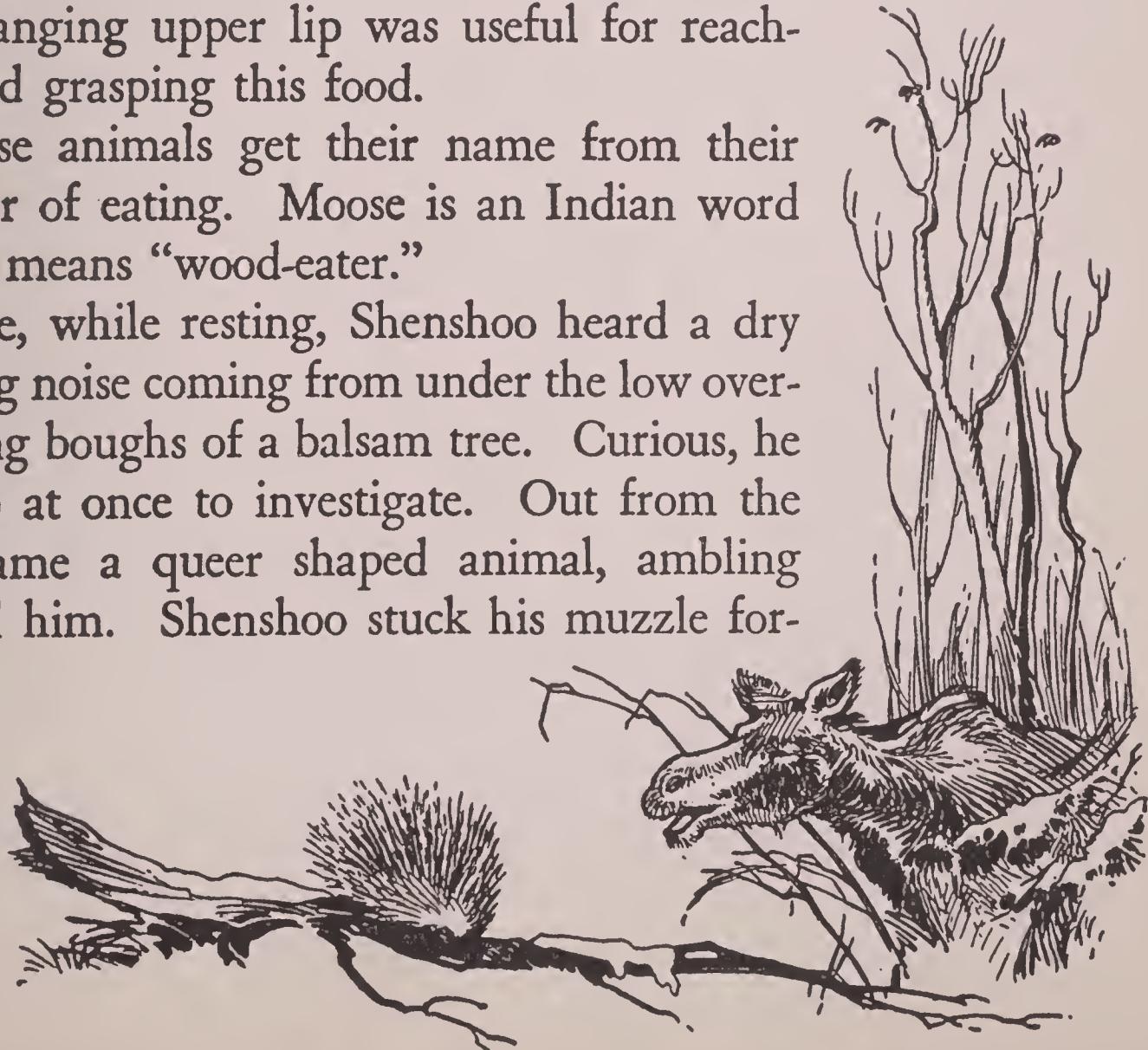
*It was a clumsy looking youngster who jogged
behind his mother through the Canadian woods.*

he stopped his mother waited for him, but as soon as she thought he had rested long enough, she pushed him with her nose and made him get up. She seemed to have in mind some definite goal which she was anxious to reach.

When Shenshoo got hungry a queer little bleat came up in his throat and at the sound his mother would stand still while he pushed and butted at her udder for milk. The cow, too, fed along the way. She would select a young poplar sapling, straddle it with her front legs and hold it down with her chest while she ate buds and tender branches. Her long over-hanging upper lip was useful for reaching and grasping this food.

These animals get their name from their manner of eating. Moose is an Indian word which means "wood-eater."

Once, while resting, Shenshoo heard a dry rustling noise coming from under the low over-hanging boughs of a balsam tree. Curious, he got up at once to investigate. Out from the tree came a queer shaped animal, ambling toward him. Shenshoo stuck his muzzle for-



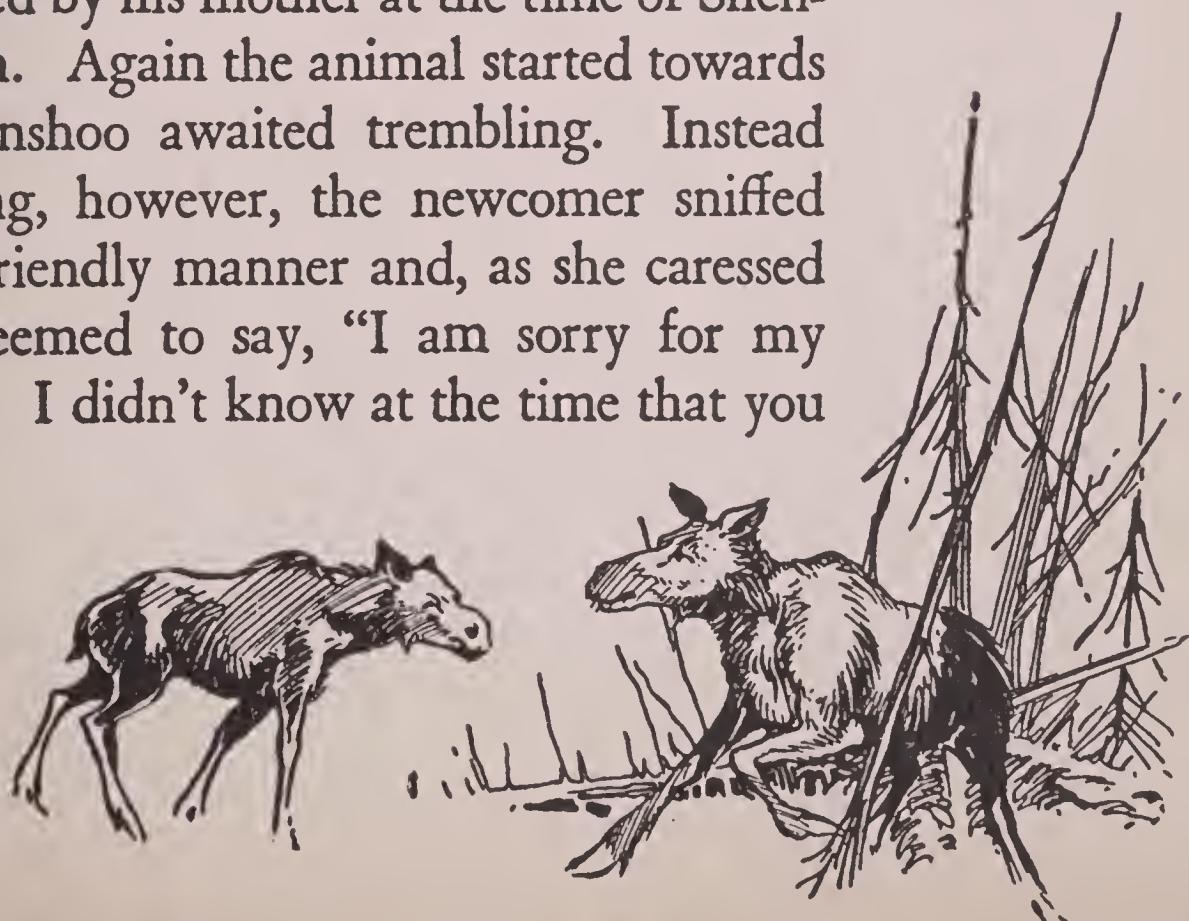
ward in a friendly greeting, but jerked it back with a cry of pain, as the porcupine—for that's what it was—struck with its tail and filled the poor calf's nose and lips with a score of sharp, fiery quills.

He ran bleating to his mother, but she was powerless to help him. By rubbing against the rough bark of trees he removed some of the quills, but many of them stayed in for days until they festered out. They were very painful, and taught him with every twinge of pain, that porcupines are privileged animals, that they can wander through the woods whither they will and remain unmolested.

By traveling constantly and resting often a great many miles were covered even at the slow pace that the calf was able to make. On the evening of the second day, just as the sun was setting, they entered a meadow at the end of a deep bay. Here the mother slackened her gait. This was the feeding ground she had left when about to give birth to her calves, and this was the spot she had been heading for during the past two days.

They were halfway across the meadow when Shenshoo heard a grunt very much like his mother's but coming from the woods to the left of him. He stopped and stood gazing in the direction of the sound. Out of the gathering darkness a big form rushed at him. He started to run but was quickly overtaken, and before he knew it he was on his back, squealing with fright. His mother ran back and was just in time to save him from complete annihilation. With many grunts and pushes she got his adversary away from him and Shenshoo scrambled to his feet. Through frightened eyes he saw it was another moose, not nearly as large as his mother but greatly resembling her nevertheless.

It was his older sister, born the year before and deserted by his mother at the time of Shenshoo's birth. Again the animal started towards him. Shenshoo awaited trembling. Instead of attacking, however, the newcomer sniffed him in a friendly manner and, as she caressed him she seemed to say, "I am sorry for my roughness. I didn't know at the time that you



were one of the family." Having made this apology she turned away and walked into the woods alone.



CHAPTER III

SHENSHOO MEETS MAN

EARLY in May a change came over the north country. The days became warmer and a constant fall of rain washed away the softening snow. One night the wind began blowing from the south. For two days it blew steadily and then Shenshoo heard a new sound, a roaring, crashing noise as though great rocks were being ground together by some giant crusher. It was the arrival of spring, and the waves of the lake were dashing tons of ice to pieces upon the rocky shore—ice that had been holding them captive in a cold blue prison all winter long.

The morning after the ice went out Shenshoo had a novel experience. His mother had gone down to the lake very early, and while he stood whimpering on the shore, she had waded out until only her head was visible. She seemed



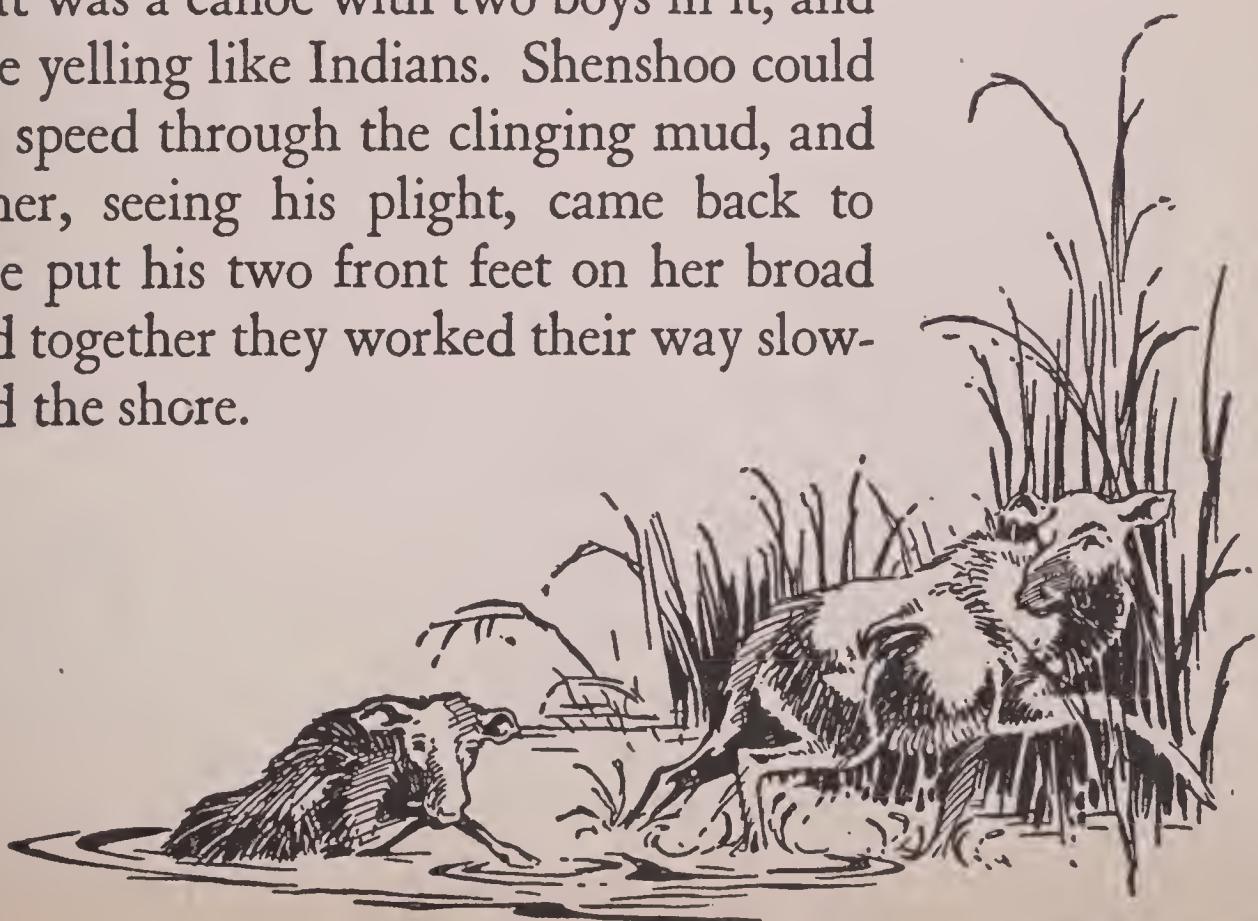
to enjoy the feel of the cold water. Then she came out dripping and whined for Shenshoo to go in too, but he was terrified at the thought. She maneuvered till she got him between her and the water. Then she ran at him and pushed him into the lake. Under the water he went and came up choking. When he started to scramble out his mother, standing on the bank, kept him in. He floundered around for a few minutes and then discovered that he too liked the water. This was a happy discovery, because from now on most of his time during the summer months would be spent in the lakes and muskegs which dotted that country.

With the coming of June great swarms of insects hatched out of the swamps and stagnant pools. For weeks millions of these tiny pests circled day and night about Shenshoo and his mother. They crawled into their eyes, and ears, and nose, and burrowed down to the roots of their coarse hair to gorge themselves on animal blood.

Shenshoo, like all other moose, had no tail

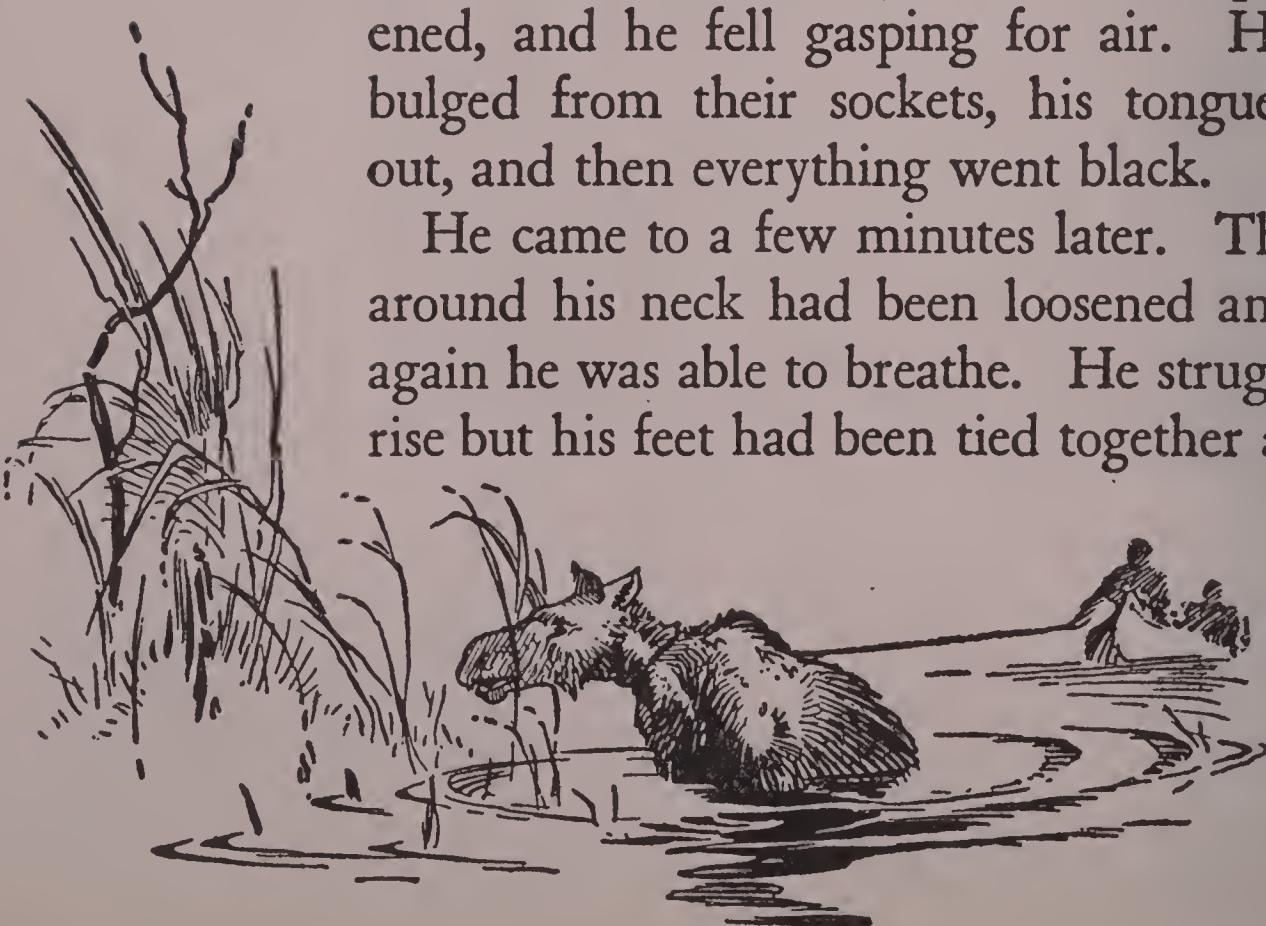
with which he could brush off these tormentors. He stamped his feet and waved his head wildly about in vain. They still persisted in annoying him. His only relief came when he submerged himself in the water, and even then the swarms would settle on the tip of his nose, just showing above the water, and compel him to dip that under every few minutes.

It was while he and his mother were lying in a muskeg late one afternoon, protecting themselves from the insects, that a calamity nearly overtook Shenshoo. He first knew that something was wrong when his mother gave a startled grunt, and headed towards shore, plunging through the heavy mud. Shenshoo wheeled to follow her and saw coming towards him over the surface of the muskeg a strange object. It was a canoe with two boys in it, and they were yelling like Indians. Shenshoo could make no speed through the clinging mud, and his mother, seeing his plight, came back to him. He put his two front feet on her broad back, and together they worked their way slowly toward the shore.



Progress was slow and the canoe quickly caught up to them. The boy in the bow waved his arms in the air and the loop of a rope fell about Shenshoo's neck. He tried to shake it off but couldn't. The canoe followed him to shore. His mother scrambled up the bank and plunged into the forest. Shenshoo started after her but was jerked off his feet as the rope pulled taut. In agony he gave a strangled bleat for his mother. Never had she deserted him before when he needed help, but this time, although he could hear her thrashing about in the woods, she did not come to his aid. There was one enemy his mother dared not face, and she had gotten the scent of that enemy—man. With a cry of despair Shenshoo got to his feet and lunged forward again, but the rope tightened, and he fell gasping for air. His eyes bulged from their sockets, his tongue hung out, and then everything went black.

He came to a few minutes later. The rope around his neck had been loosened and once again he was able to breathe. He struggled to rise but his feet had been tied together and his



efforts were futile. The boys tried to carry him to their canoe, but he was two months old now and was much too heavy. After a number of attempts to move him they gave up, and tying the end of the rope to a pine stump got in their canoe and paddled away, leaving the poor calf helpless on the shore.

As soon as the canoe was out of sight, Shen-shoo's mother returned and began comforting him. But he was in a sad plight. Unable to stand he could get no food, and the rope about his ankles was very painful.

Darkness came, and with it came fear. The fear of an animal helpless at night in the north woods. Instinct told his mother that before many hours the plight of her calf would be discovered by the all-seeing eyes of some prowling timber wolf. Then again would be fought a battle for his life, such as the one on the day he was born.

She had not long to wait.

To her ears was borne the hunting cry of a wolf. Far away it seemed at first—the long low whine—but nearer and nearer it came.



Shenshoo strained at the ropes which bound him. Then into his circle of vision slunk a gray form, which sat on its haunches a few feet away. It seemed sure of its prey and content to wait. Once it turned its nose toward the stars, and the hills vibrated with the blood-curdling howl of a wolf calling for assistance. The plea was heard and within an hour two more wolves sat watching the helpless moose. The mother charged at them occasionally, but they lightly stepped aside and she swept by them clumsily.

The wolves seemed to be waiting for some signal before attacking. With long, red tongues they constantly licked their watering mouths. Suddenly all three wolves stood up, ears and noses alert, then, after moving about uneasily, faded away into the darkness.

As they disappeared a loud whoop came across the water, and the rhythmic dip of a paddle was heard. The bow of a canoe pushed into the bank, a bright light flashed in Shenshoo's eyes, and the dreaded scent of man again filled his nostrils. With a hunting knife a boy



cut the ropes that bound the moose, and stiffly he got to his feet and limped away to join his mother in the woods.



CHAPTER IV

SHENSHOO STRIKES OUT FOR HIMSELF

BY THE time summer had gone, and the first frost's warning of the approach of winter had come, Shenshoo had grown into quite a big calf.

He was depending little now upon his mother's supply of milk. He had learned to browse the way she did, breasting down the young saplings and feeding upon the branches. His mother had also taught him to find the succulent roots of the water lily, growing in the mud below the surface of the sheltered bays. Wading out, he submerged his head for minutes at a time, and pushed his nose along the soft bottom until he located one of the big roots. Tearing it loose he brought it to the surface and ate it. One could always tell where Shenshoo had been feeding by the remnants



of these water lily meals which littered the surface long after he had gone.

September came and the woods were a mass of color. The leaves of the moose woods were a bright red; those of the poplar and birch a brilliant yellow; and the willows, by the edge of the lakes and streams, a deep brown. Squirrels, who had spent most of the summer months chasing each other from tree to tree with much chattering, began the serious business now of gathering nuts and pine cones for their winter supply of food.

Hanging to the swaying ends of branches on the tall pine trees, one of these little fellows cut the cones off, and when a dozen or more had clattered to the rocks below, the squirrel raced down the rough trunk, gathered them up and gnawed the covering away from the tiny seeds. These seeds he deposited in his cheeks, until his jowls swelled out like a boy with mumps. When his mouth could hold no more he hurried off and hid them in his storehouse under a big boulder.

With the coming of frost the flies and



mosquitoes disappeared, and life became more pleasant for the moose and other animals of the north woods. A marked change, too, came over Shenshoo's mother. She got very restless and was not satisfied to remain around the lakes where they had spent the summer. She took long tramps across country, covering twenty and thirty miles in a day.

One evening just about sunset, mother and calf were standing in a thicket on the shore of a small lake. They had traveled many miles since sunrise, and Shenshoo was enjoying the rest in the gathering darkness. Suddenly from across the lake came a low "Oh—o—o—wah." His mother pricked up her ears at the sound. Again came the queer call and Shenshoo shivered as his mother began answering. Droning out a long "Oo," in a very high pitch, she followed it with a long drawn out "Wau," and sank an octave to end her answer in a low gutteral "Ach."

The last syllable had scarcely been uttered when a challenging "Wau—wau—wau," answered her. Then all was silent again.

Shenshoo lay down to rest for the night but his mother remained standing. He was awakened from a doze by a low "Waw," just outside the thicket, and there he saw a large bull standing outlined against the lake. Uttering a low whine his mother pushed out to meet the stranger. Shenshoo scrambled to his feet and started to follow, but was quickly made to understand, by his mother, that he was not wanted. He felt very disconsolate as she left him and wandered off along the shore with her new found mate.

It was nearly a week before Shenshoo saw his mother again, and then they resumed their former companionship, and started the winter together.

Late in October, fringes of ice began to gather on the edges of the bays and smaller lakes. The moose spent very little time in the water now. Shenshoo's mother had found a new pasture that was ideal for the winter. It was a large sloping plain, thickly wooded with birch and poplar, and surrounded by high hills, which protected it from the biting winds



blowing from the north. At one end of the pasture there was a swampy meadow, and a little creek ran out of this and down through a narrow valley. A colony of beavers had dammed this creek and made a small lake. The noise of the falling trees cut by these busy animals for their winter food used to startle Shenshoo, but he soon became used to it. With his mother he waded out into the beaver pond to drink, and they usually stood together right near the large round beaver house. Often, as the moose stood there, the quiet of the pond would be shattered as some playful beaver swam to the surface and smacked it with his flat tail.

In selecting this as the ideal place for the winter the moose were mistaken. Early that spring the colony of beavers had been discovered by a trapper looking for new territory, and already he was on his way from the distant town to set traps in the beaver house.

The first intimation that the moose had of danger was the sound of a rifle shot. They were both drinking beside the beaver house.



*They were both drinking beside the beaver house
when the sound of a rifle shot echoed from the hills.*

As the echoes of the shot vibrated from the hills, Shenshoo's mother lurched towards him and fell on her side. He turned and splashed out of the water. His mother arose slowly and followed. He waited an instant on the edge of the pond, and saw that she was hobbling on three legs for one of her hind ones was hanging useless. Shenshoo started out up the trail. From behind a rock right in front of him came a flash of fire. His ears rang with the sound of a rifle only a few feet away. He swerved and rushed off the trail, crashing through the brush as fast as his frightened legs could carry him. Straight for the side of the hill he went and scrambled up through the tangled growth. He didn't stop running until he had crossed the divide and was safely on the other side.

The scent he got, as that last shot was fired, was the scent of man. It warned him that there was danger lurking in the poplar flat and he did not return. He waited across the hill many days for his mother but he never saw her again.

Little did he know how narrow had been

his own escape. The two shots had been fired by the trapper at Shenshoo, and it was only through poor shooting that his mother had been shot and his life saved.



CHAPTER V

SHENSHOO GROWS HIS FIRST HORNS

AFTER many days of lonely wandering Shenshoo found himself again in the meadow where he and his mother had spent most of the spring and summer. Other moose were gathering there for the winter and the young orphan joined them.

When spring came a queer lump began to form on the top of Shenshoo's head. It was a dark, mushroom-like growth, and it grew noticeably bigger each day. He didn't know that a great vein in his neck was carrying a supply of lime to his head, and that this lump was the beginning of a pair of horns.

By July the new horns had taken a rather definite shape, and by August had become quite hard. They were still covered, however, with a dark velvety skin. About the middle of August they began itching terribly, and were



a constant annoyance. Shenshoo found relief by rubbing them against branches of trees. This he did constantly, with the result that the velvety covering was soon rubbed off, and the horns became bone-like and shiny.

These horns of Shenshoo's were not like those of any other animal. Instead of being round and pointed like those of domestic cattle, or branched like the horns of deer and elk, his were shaped more like a scoop, with a number of sharp prongs along the edges.

With the acquiring of horns a new mood came over Shenshoo. He was no longer content to remain in a fixed locality, but, like his mother during the previous fall, he began roaming over great areas. This constant exercise hardened the muscles of his legs and he became very strong. He was over five feet now at the shoulders and weighed five or six hundred pounds. His hair was a glossy black.

One evening as he was feeding along the shores of a small lake, a call came to him across the water. It was a call such as his mother had made on the night she left him for the

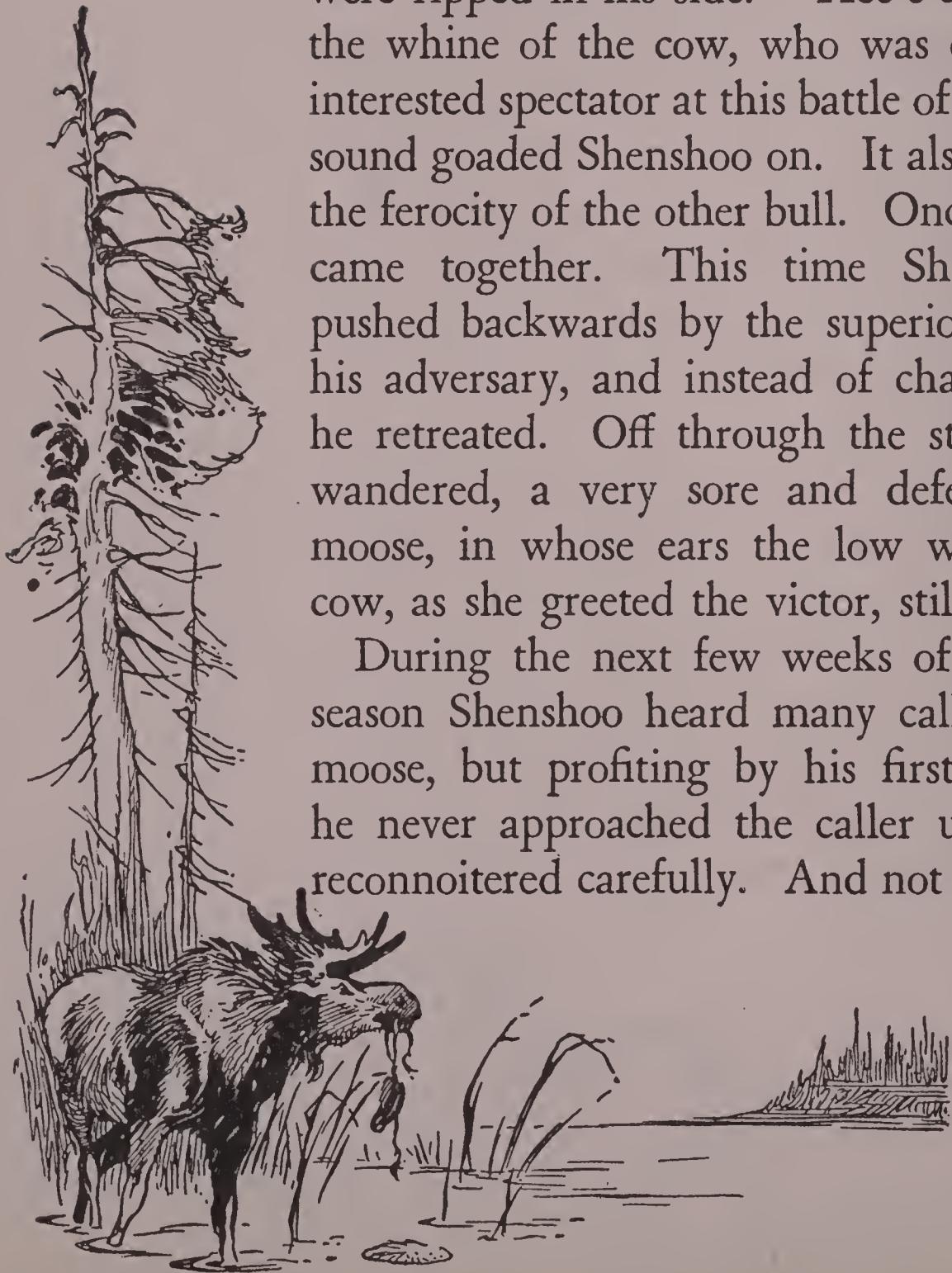
rendezvous with the strange bull. It thrilled him with a keen desire to locate the owner. Lifting his head Shenshoo answered with a low "Oh-o-o-wah," and then swam across the lake in the direction from which the tantalizing call had come.

As he strode ashore on a sandy beach he heard the call again, this time from beneath a great Norway pine, a hundred yards down the shore. Answering, he started trotting towards the tree, and when quite near stood still and listened. He heard no sound, so he gave his call again, this time very low and scarcely audible. Instantly an answer came back from the woods, but instead of being one of invitation, it was a gruff "A-wah"—a challenge. Shenshoo's hair rose along his shoulders, and up the back of his neck, and his throat rumbled defiance. Again came the challenging grunt, this time followed by a terrific crashing through the brush. Spurred on by a low whine from the cow, who had not yet shown herself, Shenshoo dashed to meet his adversary—another bull also seeking the favors of the hidden cow.



The woods resounded with the impact as the antlers of the charging moose clashed together. Shenshoo was pushed to his knees by the force of the onslaught. He rose and charged again. The other bull stepped quickly aside and raked him mercilessly with his sharp horns as he lumbered by. Two long gashes were ripped in his side. "Hee-e-e-yuh," came the whine of the cow, who was evidently an interested spectator at this battle of rivals. The sound goaded Shenshoo on. It also stimulated the ferocity of the other bull. Once more they came together. This time Shenshoo was pushed backwards by the superior weight of his adversary, and instead of charging again he retreated. Off through the still night he wandered, a very sore and defeated young moose, in whose ears the low whine of the cow, as she greeted the victor, still rang.

During the next few weeks of the mating season Shenshoo heard many calls of female moose, but profiting by his first experience, he never approached the caller until he had reconnoitered carefully. And not until he was



certain that no other hostile rival awaited him did he make his presence known.

Early in January he had a humiliating experience. Traveling through a dense thicket, on the edge of a muskeg, one of his horns became entangled between two cedars. He wrenched to get it free, and to his dismay the horn broke off and fell to the ground. The unbalanced weight of the other horn pulled his head to one side and made walking difficult. He was not relieved until he butted this against a tree and broke it off too.

The loss of his horns was depressing to Shenshoo, and for days he wandered about by himself, dejected and sullen, but with the coming of spring, the lump on his head started to grow again. The horns this time were larger than the pair he lost in the cedar swamp.



CHAPTER VI

SHENSHOO IS RIDDEN

SINCE the day that his mother was shot Shenshoo had not smelled the odor of man. However, he didn't forget it. Late in July, in his fourth year, he was swimming a wide lake when the scent that he feared came to him once again. He was heading towards a sandy beach a mile away, but at the warning changed his direction and hurriedly swam for a near-by cove at the foot of a high cliff.

As the scent became stronger he strained every muscle, urging his great body through the water with powerful heaves. Then he heard shouting. He turned his head and was startled to see three canoes bearing down upon him, the nearest one less than fifty yards away.

Swimming at a pace that he had never attained before, Shenshoo reached the shore a brief instant ahead of the first canoe, and



plunged into a fringe of willows which bordered the lake. After crashing through the brush for a few yards he was dismayed to find his progress checked by a steep wall of rock which he was unable to climb. He rushed frantically about trying to find a way out, but in vain. The wall hemmed him in, and his only means of retreat lay over a sloping slide of loose boulders on one side of the cove. Going back the way he had come was out of the question, because the boys had landed. Not having seen Shenshoo climb the cliff, they were noisily searching for him in the willows.

He hesitated on the edge of the slide, fearful of stepping out into the open. A loud yell told him that he had been discovered, so overcoming his fear he began picking his way across the rocky slide. He could see the boys following him in canoes below.

The noise of their yelling, and the strong odor of man, made Shenshoo nervous. He tried running when he came to a large smooth sloping rock, but his feet slipped and he fell heavily on his side, and began sliding down

towards the lake. It looked for a moment as though he were going to land right in one of the canoes. A stump of pine stopped the descent of Shenshoo just before his huge body could hit the water. Realizing that he couldn't climb the cliff, he regained his feet and entered the water to swim around the point to a better landing place. The canoes came between him and the shore and forced him out into the lake once again.

With one canoe behind him, and one on either side Shenshoo was in a very effective floating corral. The canoe on the right pushed up close to him, and he felt a tug on the long hair on his back. Inhaling deeply he dove under the canoe, coming up on the other side. For a moment he thought he was free, but the canoes were soon beside him again, and once more his case seemed hopeless. He was getting tired, and his breath came in short, noisy gasps.

Then he heard a yell, and saw the boy in the canoe nearest him stand up, pause for an instant, and then leap. Shenshoo was pushed under the water as a heavy body landed



*The canoes came between him and the shore and
forced him out into the lake once again*

squarely upon his back. He came up gasping for air. Flinging his head from side to side he attempted to dislodge his terrifying load, but the boy hung on. Shenshoo felt him creeping along toward his head, then in his ear came a deafening sound, as the boy shouted. The noise of it drove the moose frantic, and again he dove. Down, down, down he went till his feet touched the bottom. He felt the boy sink with him at first, but as he went deeper the grip on his hair relaxed, and the moose rose to the surface free of his passenger who was floundering about in the water some yards behind him.

The canoe went back to rescue the boy, and Shenshoo headed for shore. There was a brief chase, but the moose had too great a start, and making the most of it he scrambled ashore. As he entered the forest he stumbled and fell, weak from exhaustion, but getting to his feet he wobbled off and soon his strength returned. Then for hours he kept pushing on in a direction away from that lake and the hated smell of man.



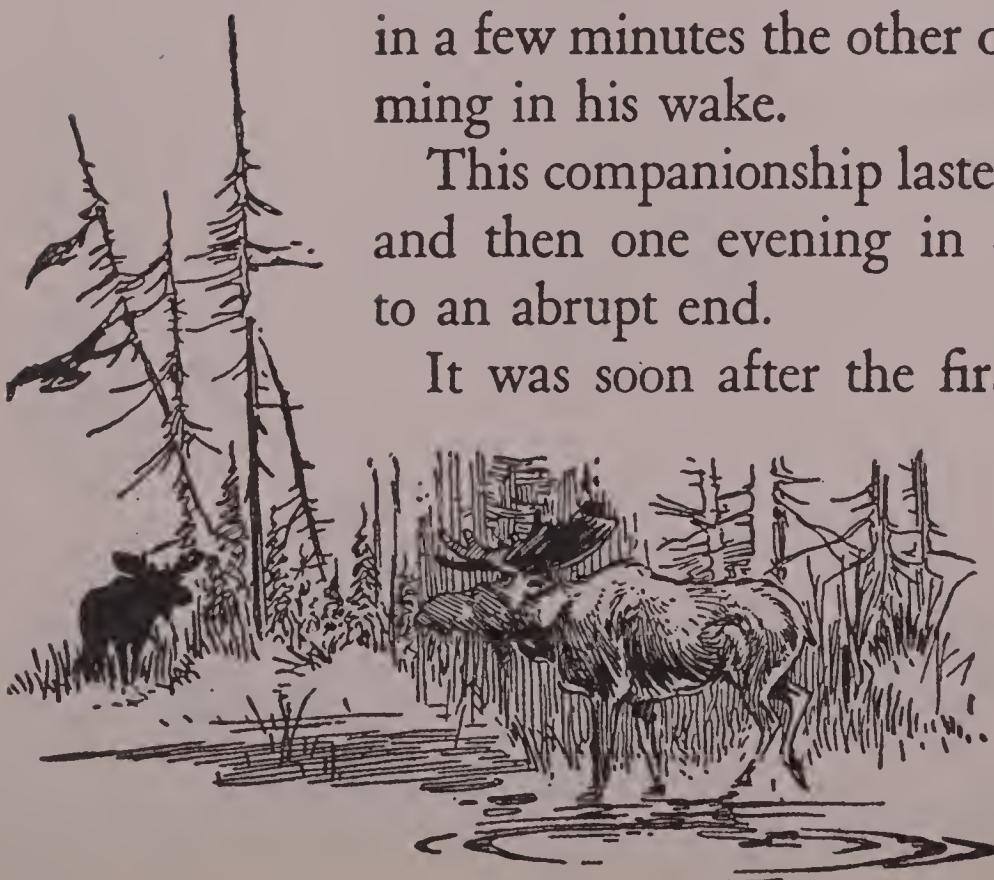
CHAPTER VII

A STRANGE CALL

SHORTLY after the swimming episode, Shenshoo made friends with another bull about his own age. It was a rather novel companionship. The two friends were content if they were within sight of each other. They seldom communicated. In the evening, along toward dusk, when they were feeding, one of them would walk out into a bay, eat some lily roots, and then leisurely splash his way back to shore. Shortly afterwards the other bull would come out and go through the same motions. If one animal swam across a lake, in a few minutes the other one would be swimming in his wake.

This companionship lasted for over a month, and then one evening in September it came to an abrupt end.

It was soon after the first frost. Shenshoo



and his friend were some yards apart browsing along a shore when they heard the low whining of a cow seeking a mate. Both of them started in the direction from which the call had come. When it came again, Shenshoo turned and glared at the bull who had been his friend. The hair on both of their backs arose, and in each throat sounded a challenging grunt. Forgetful of past friendship they rushed together like enemies. Two and three times they collided head on.

Then Shenshoo remembered the trick he had learned in his first fight. Grunting a challenge he lowered his antlers, and the other bull came right at him. Shenshoo stepped aside, and as his adversary charged by, he gored him in the side. The prongs of his horns went right in, and so vicious was his lunge that the other bull, caught off balance, fell. Twice Shenshoo gored him before he got up. It was a badly beaten bull who staggered off into the woods leaving Shenshoo champion.

Uttering another challenge he went to look for the cow, who had been silently watching

the battle for her favors from a secure hiding place. Acknowledging Shenshoo as the victor the cow now came towards him, and by a series of low whines and grunts, let him know that through his prowess he had won her.

After a week spent with his newly found mate, Shenshoo began to tire of her company. His ears were again alert to the sounds of other cows calling. Each time that he attempted to answer them, however, his mate would whine his affections back to her.

One day an unusually enticing call came. Shenshoo was standing in a grove of pine when he first heard it. His mate had wandered off some distance to feed. He waited till the call came again and then started out to investigate. He was not the clumsy young bull now, crashing through the woods in the direction of the call, but an older one much wiser. This time he approached silently, traveling through the woods without making a sound. Testing each bit of ground before putting his weight down, he proceeded slowly and as noiselessly as a shadow. For periods of minutes he stood

perfectly still, listening. The call was often repeated, as he gradually worked his way nearer. He thought it came from a dense clump of woods across a little clearing, and he waited on the edge of that clearing before crossing it.

The call of the cow was then followed by the bleat of a calf, but still Shenshoo remained hidden. Then came the challenge of another bull, this too from across the clearing. Shenshoo answered with a low "Wau-wau-wau." Again the cow whined and Shenshoo waited for the challenge of the bull. It came, but not as a challenge, instead it was in a pleading tone — a bull coaxing a cow to desist from calling another mate. This was a new experience to Shenshoo. Instead of crossing the clearing, he began circling it, still keeping in the shadow of the woods.

When almost around, a gust of wind brought to him the scent of man. He was all in a panic as once more he smelled the dreaded odor. Throwing his antlers back on his shoulders he dashed off into the woods. As he



wheeled his body showed for an instant at the edge of the clearing, and at that instant came the report of a rifle.

A burning pain stung Shenshoo in his hind leg. Twice more shots sounded, but he raced on untouched by any but the first one. He galloped through the woods for miles, and then began to tire from loss of blood. Pushing his way into a secluded swamp he lay down to rest. Next morning his leg was so stiff and sore he could hardly get up. For weeks he cruised in the cover of the swamp, fearful of leaving it, and gradually his wound healed.

The danger from which he had so narrowly escaped was a new one for him. His enemy, man, through the skillful use of a birch bark trumpet, could imitate the call of a cow moose seeking a mate, and then with a rifle await the approach of the eager bull.

Shenshoo's nose alone could save him from this new danger, and never afterwards did he approach a calling cow until he had first circled her hiding place silently, and sniffed the air for the tell-tale scent.

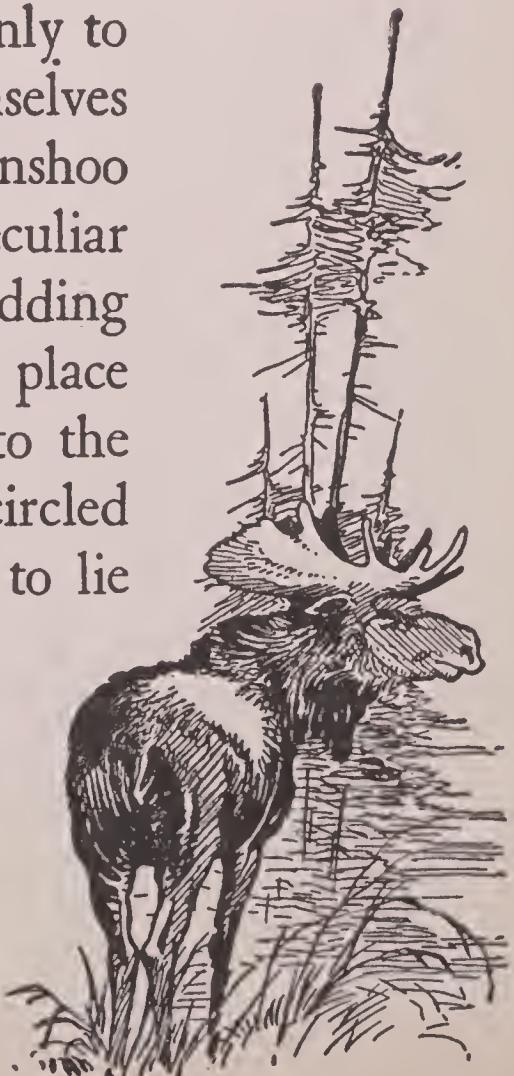


CHAPTER VIII

THE WINTER OF LITTLE SNOW

SHENSHOO was now a magnificent creature, standing over six feet high at the shoulders. His antlers, which continued to drop off every year, and grow bigger as they came in again were enormous now. They measured six feet across and weighed eighty pounds. His great size and ability as a fighter made him fearless of all animals. He still, however, was afraid of man.

Long life in the north woods comes only to those animals who carefully protect themselves from danger. As the years passed Shenshoo became cautious in many ways. One peculiar procedure he always followed before bedding down for the night. First he passed the place where he intended to stop, walking into the wind. A quarter of a mile away he circled and made a parallel trail and returned to lie



down a hundred yards or more from the trail he had first made. If he were being followed, he could in this way see his enemy passing along the first trail in plenty of time to be up and away. His big ears were constantly alert to pick up the faintest sound, and with each breath his wide nostrils sampled the air for alien scents.

Then came the cold winter of little snow. Many of the smaller animals and birds suffered as the temperature went down, and no snow came to protect them. The partridges, which depend upon burrowing into the snow for relief from the cold, froze to death in the wind swept woods.

The wolves were plentiful that year and they had a hard time getting food. The deer, not hindered now by the deep drifts, were able to out-run the hunting packs. The wolves' only chance for food lay in overtaking some unfortunate animal while he was crossing a lake on the glare ice. Their padded paws provided a much surer footing on the slippery ice than the hard hoofs of deer and moose.



One cold afternoon in December, Shenshoo slowly felt his way across a wide expanse of shining ice. He wanted to browse on a chain of small islands far out in the lake. His progress was being anxiously watched by a pack of timber wolves on the shore. He crossed the dangerous ice safely, fed across the first island, and was crossing to the next, when the ice, weakened by the current flowing between the two islands, gave way under his great weight, and he found himself struggling about in the freezing water.

His plight was at once seen by the wolves, and they hastened out to the struggling moose.

Putting his fore feet up on the edge of the hole Shenshoo tried climbing out, but the ice was too thin, and broke away each time he put his weight on it.

The wolves gathered in a circle about the floundering moose. He glared at them, tossing his head, but they knew he was harmless, and they snarled and snapped at his feet as he lifted them out on the ice. The wolves were sure of a meal.



But luck was with Shenshoo. As he thrashed around, his big hoofs struck a shoal of rock running between the two islands. He followed this shoal, breaking a path through the ice, and climbed out on the island. As his huge body arose out of the water the wolves slunk back.

He was very tired and the exertion in the icy water had sapped his strength. But instead of waiting on the island until he was rested, he foolishly started across the ice towards the mainland. As he stepped out on the slippery surface the pack of wolves rushed him. He turned to charge them but his feet slipped and down he crashed on the ice with a thud that reverberated around the lake.

The wolves were upon him in an instant, all of them trying to sink their fangs into the violently kicking legs of the helpless moose. One of the broad hoofs of Shenshoo caught a big wolf squarely in the side and crushed in his ribs. The starving animals began devouring their wounded companion, and Shenshoo was able to get up.

By keeping his head down, and kicking out

at the pack when they got too close to his heels he was able to make his way safely to shore, and as soon as he entered the forest the wolves left him.



CHAPTER IX

SHENSHOO'S LAST ADVENTURE

JOE NATAWAY'S father, an Ojibway chief, was famed for his skill in tracking animals, and as soon as Joe had been able to walk, his training had started. All his life he had been in the woods, and now, as an old man, he was rated as the best hunter and guide in his part of the country.

He had the enviable reputation of being the only man who had ever been clever enough to approach a sleeping moose, and slap him on the back before he awoke.

Nataway had often seen Shenshoo's tracks, and once in the spring, when the Indian was returning from his trapping grounds, he caught a glimpse of the big bull feeding along the shore of Manitou lake. It was from Nataway that Walter Brooks first heard of Shenshoo.

Walter Brooks was a naturalist. His time

was spent collecting and mounting animals for a museum in one of the large midwestern cities. He had been commissioned to secure a bull moose to complete a group of these animals in the Hall of Mammals in his museum. Hearing of Joe Nataway's ability, he hired him as guide for the party that started out to get the moose. He took two other guides along to help with the paddling, and also to carry the loads across the portages, because Manitou was one of those remote lakes, reached only by canoe in the summer, and by dog sled and snow shoe in the winter.

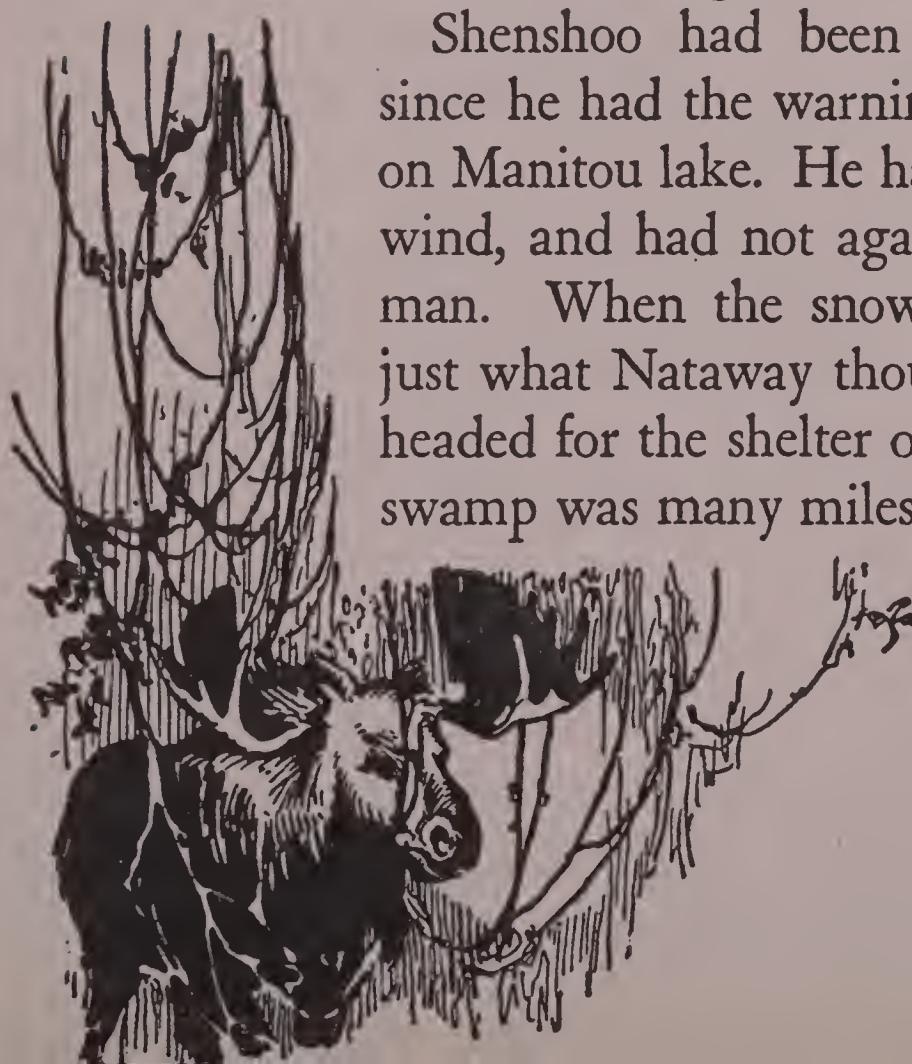
Shenshoo had been feeding on Manitou, but when the party made the portage into the lake, he had gotten their wind, and by the time that their camp was set up he was ten miles away and heading north. The next day Joe picked up his tracks, but after following them for some miles, and noting their direction, he decided that the moose had been warned of his danger, and that the wise old animal had changed his feeding grounds.

Camp was moved fifteen miles farther north

to a little lake without a name. That night it began to snow—those large soft flakes which announce the coming of winter in the north. By morning the already frozen ground was covered to a depth of three inches. It was an ideal tracking snow, and Nataway took advantage of it.

Leaving the guides in camp he filled a pack-sack with two days' provisions, and then he and Brooks started out, each carrying a rifle. Knowing the direction in which Shenshoo had gone, Joe was sure that with the coming of snow the moose would head for the shelter of a very remote swamp fifteen miles across country from the lake where they were camped. And he was right.

Shenshoo had been going straight north since he had the warning scent of the hunters on Manitou lake. He had been facing a strong wind, and had not again smelled the odor of man. When the snow storm began, he did just what Nataway thought he would do. He headed for the shelter of the big swamp. This swamp was many miles in area, and furnished



excellent browsing as well as protection from the weather. Shenshoo entered it from the south, circling around the base of a high rock hill which formed the southern boundary of the swamp.

Nataway and Brooks arrived at the base of the hill at noon, but instead of circling it as the moose had done, and entering the swamp, the men climbed straight up the rough sides and when near the top made camp in the shelter of an overhanging ledge. For water they scraped up some snow and melted it in their tea pail.

All that night the wind blew from the northeast.

About midnight Nataway aroused Brooks, and gave him a pot of hot tea to drink. Then, after carefully extinguishing the fire, he led the way toward the summit. Brooks marveled at the skill with which the Indian led him through the darkness. Up, and over the top they went, the cold wind chilling them as they began the decent. Joe whispered to be as careful as possible, and very slowly they climbed

down. After a hundred yards of picking their way they came to a large flat rock. Had they stepped over the edge in the darkness they would have fallen many feet and been killed on the rocks below. This flat rock was the roof of a cave set in the hillside. Working their way around the side of it, they crawled into the shelter to wait for daylight.

After what seemed hours of waiting the sky began to grow lighter in the northeast, and soon Brooks could make out the surrounding country. Sitting in the mouth of the cave he could see out over the wide expanse of the swamp. The wind still blowing from the northeast came across the swamp before reaching the men, and did not carry their odor to the animals sleeping in the tangled thickets below them.

As soon as it was light enough, Brooks took his binoculars out of their case, and through their high powered lenses scanned every foot of the swamp. Once his hands twitched as he saw a black body moving across the range of his vision. He reached for the rifle at his side,

and adjusted the sights, but he discovered, when he looked again, that what he saw was a cow moose, and near her a half grown calf. The group at the museum already had a cow and calf—he was interested only in securing a bull.

For an hour or more he strained his eyes, the glasses sweeping back and forth. Joe Nata-way had been looking too, but not through glasses. He peered out with his left hand shading his eyes from the sun, which had now risen and was shining directly into the cave. Suddenly the old Indian reached out and touched Brooks on the shoulder. Then he pointed to a spot almost directly below them. Brooks focused the glasses on it for a moment, quickly handed them to the guide, and reached for his rifle. He pressed the butt against his shoulder, and sighted along the blued steel barrel. The first finger of his right hand was bent over the trigger.

Shenshoo, the night before, had, as was his custom, carefully circled the swamp before lying down to sleep at the base of the cliff. The



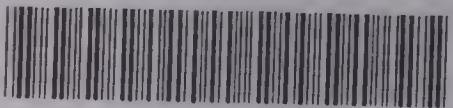
wind blowing from the north would bring him the scent of an enemy who might be stalking him unseen. Behind him was the rocky cliff. No danger could assail him from that direction, he thought.

As the rays of the sun shone in his eyes, he arose from his steaming bed to begin the day's feeding. The patch of grass upon which he had spent the night was mashed down as though a steam roller had passed over it. The snow had been melted away by the heat of his body. He was a little stiff from the rest, and as he got up he stood for a moment stretching one of his legs out behind him.

A pebble rolled from the mouth of the cave above him. It bounced against the side of the cliff and fell clattering through the limbs of a dead cedar. Alert at the sound, he turned his great head quickly to discover the cause, and looked up towards the cave. At that instant, Brooks' finger pressed the trigger, and Shen-shoo dropped lifeless, struck by a bullet just behind the ear.



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